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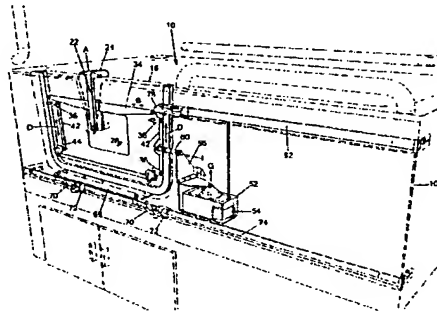
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(54) Title: BATHTUB HAVING SLIDING ACCESS DOOR FOR THE DISABLED AND ELDERLY



WO 03/056992 A1

(57) Abstract: A bathtub for the disabled or elderly includes a tub (10) having an enclosure defined by at least one sidewall (10a), where the sidewall (10a) has a doorway therein providing access from an external side of the sidewall (10a), external to the enclosure, into the enclosure. A generally horizontal and vertically spaced apart pair of elongate guides (74, 82) are provided in the sidewall (10a). A door is slidably mounted to the guides (74, 82) on at least one pivotable linkage arm (70, 78). The pivotable linkage arm (70, 78) is pivotally mounted to both the door and at least one of the guides, and is adapted for generally horizontal translation along the sidewall (10a), in cooperation with the guides (74, 82), between a closed position wherein the door is releasably lockably mounted in watertight sealed engagement within the doorway, and an open position wherein the door is clear of the aperture and substantially parallel to the sidewall (10a). A releasable latch (40, 48) and a cooperating latch actuator (22) is provided for releasably latching engagement of the door in the watertight sealed engagement in the doorway and for releasing the door from such engagement upon actuation of the latch actuator (22) into a release position by a user in the enclosure. A latch release disabling means (52, 54, 56, 58, 60) is provided for disabling the latch actuator (22) when a fluid level in the enclosure is higher than a threshold level below a lowermost sill of the doorway.